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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

11 October 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: DC/SB/S

SUBJECT : Compromising material confiscated by Soviet
customs authorities in Kiev from a Western
Traveller

1. Vira VOWK (Head of the Department of German Literature and Language, St. Ursula Catholic University, Rio de Janeiro; employee of the German-Brazilian Culture Institute of Rio; member of Pen Clube Do Brazil; attended Columbia University spring and summer 1967) visited the Soviet Union from 4 September to 25 September 1967. On Subject's departure from Kiev on 25 September, she was subjected to strict customs control, although no body search was made. Every piece of her luggage was examined. All books and notes were taken from her and photographed or examined and then returned, with the exception of the following items:

a. Three typewritten copies of unpublished poems by Soviet Ukrainian poets in Kiev, Mykhaylo SACHENKO, Viktor KORDUN and Mykola VOROBYOV.

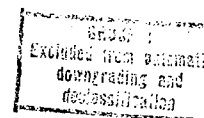
b. A book which was a collection of poetry by Ivan DRACH and which DRACH had autographed for the Subject. The book had been officially published in the Soviet Union.

c. Copy of a speech read publicly by UDOVYCHENKO, the Ukrainian Minister of Education. Although the paper had been publicly read, it was not being given any further publicity because it presented a picture of Russification in the Ukraine.

2. The typewritten poems had been given to the Subject by the authors themselves and had personal notes to her written on them. She had met them in Kiev. Because of the character of the poetry, there was little chance they would be published in the Soviet Union. As far as Subject could recollect, the

*Vowk notified
by Soviet customs
that books left
behind by her in
their home. So
she was warning on
the following custom
people to be at
home*

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poetry dealt mainly with Ukrainian nationalist and lyrical themes and were quite modern in their structure. There was nothing sensitive about the contents of DRACH's book. (See para 3 below for compromising concealed material.) The Subject was told that the typewritten manuscripts of the poetry were retained because they were not yet published. As far as the book by DRACH was concerned, the customs officers pretended they knew nothing about it, that she probably lost it at the airport or in the hotel because they had not seen it. Subject feels positive the book was taken by the customs officers.

3. The book by DRACH, as in the case of three other books which Subject got through customs, contained microfilmed copies of compromising documents which SVITLYCHNYY had (through a colleague experienced in such activity) sealed inside the covers of the books. The Subject does not know exactly what the documents in the DRACH book contained. The documents concealed in three other books which passed customs contained information concerning the persecution of Ukrainian intellectuals and anti-Soviet activities in the Ukraine and some color film of an imprisoned artists paintings. One of the documents contained the names of 7 individuals, mostly lawyers, who were arrested in 1961 in connection with organizing a Ukrainian Workers Peasants Union, a nationalist group, the program of which called for a struggle against the Soviet regime and for separation of the Ukraine from the Soviet Union. The 7 men were arrested just prior to a meeting which the group had scheduled for 22 January 1961. Five of the men were sentenced under Paragraphs 56 and 64 of the Criminal Code of the UkSSR. The sentences of the other 2 are not known.

4. On Subject's arrival in Vienna, she wrote a letter to Mykhaylo LEVISHCHENKO, (a senior official with the Committee for Cultural Contacts with Foreign Countries), complaining about the way she was mistreated by customs. Subject also wrote a letter to Hryhoriy KOCHUR with whom she had contact in the Ukraine telling him that DRACH's book was taken away from her. This was to warn those inside not to try transmitting anything else via this method.

5.. The Subject was given nothing compromising to carry in to the Soviet Union and was instructed not to carry out any printed material, under any circumstances, because it was hoped to keep her clean for future contacts. She said, however, that Ivan SVITLYCHNYY pleaded with her to take the books, and since she was given such VIP treatment by the officials she felt sure it would be safe.

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6. On 21 September the Subject was sponsored by the Society for Cultural Contacts with Ukrainians Abroad and the Union of Writers at a literary reading at the Union of Writers in Kiev. The poetry reading was originally scheduled for 6 p.m. but was changed at the very last moment to 3 p.m. (on a working day during working hours). Dmytro PAVLYCHKO was in charge of the invitations. Subject later learned that he never sent out the invitations. In spite of all the efforts to keep news about the poetry reading quiet, all seats in the meeting room were taken when Subject began to read, and many people had to stand. The Subject was later told there were over 400 people present. It seems the news about the poetry reading got circulated via "private mail" channels functioning in Kiev. The 22 September 1967 issue of Literaturna Ukraina carried a short complimentary article by Ivan DRACH about the Subject and her poetry. There was also another complimentary short item in the 26 September issue of the same newspaper about the Subject.

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